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**TO: Economic Support Supervisors
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Job Center Leads and Managers**

**FROM: Amy Mendel-Clemens
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BHCE/BWP OPERATIONS MEMO

No: 04-14

DATE: 03/18/2004

FS	<input type="checkbox"/>	MA	<input type="checkbox"/>	SC	<input type="checkbox"/>
CTS	<input type="checkbox"/>	CC	<input type="checkbox"/>	W-2	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
FSET	<input type="checkbox"/>	EA	<input type="checkbox"/>	CF	<input type="checkbox"/>
JAL	<input type="checkbox"/>	JC	<input type="checkbox"/>	RAP	<input type="checkbox"/>
WIA	<input type="checkbox"/>	WtW	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Other	EP	<input type="checkbox"/>			

PRIORITY: HIGH

SUBJECT: W-2 Performance Measures for Literacy and Numeracy Gains

CROSS REFERENCE: U.S. Department of Labor Training and Employment Guidance
Letter 15-03

EFFECTIVE DATE: April 1, 2004

PURPOSE

This memo provides additional guidance for the W-2 agency performance standard for Literacy and Numeracy Gains.

BACKGROUND

The 2004-2005 Wisconsin Works (W-2) and Related Programs contract requires W-2 agencies to meet a performance standard for Literacy and Numeracy Gains by participants in W-2 basic education programs. Detailed information about the W-2 Literacy and Numeracy Gains performance standard is provided by the W-2 Performance Standards Information Map available on the DWD web site at:

http://www.dwd.state.wi.us/dws/w2/pdf/information_map.pdf

In order to (1) provide W-2 agencies with clear and objective guidelines for meeting the Literacy and Numeracy Gains performance standard and (2) ensure that the W-2 program complies with anticipated federal performance measures for federally-funded employment and training

programs, DWD's enforcement of the Literacy and Numeracy Gains standard will be based on federal guidance issued by the Department of Labor (DOL) in its Training and Employment Guidance Letter (TEGL) 15-03 of December 10, 2003. TEGL 15-03 is accessible via the DOL web site at:

http://www.workforceatm.org/articles/template.cfm?results_art_filename=tegl1503.htm

The measures for Literacy and Numeracy Gains outlined in TEGL 15-03 are based on the Educational Gains measures of the National Reporting System (NRS) developed by the U.S. Department of Education, Division of Adult Education and Literacy. These NRS measures call for the use of tests or other assessment tools linked to a set of Educational Functioning Level Descriptors (described in attachment 1, Appendix A). NRS adopted these descriptors in an effort to provide objective standards for measuring meaningful increases in skills, to ensure greater consistency in the meaning of those measurements across different skill areas (reading and writing, numeracy, and functional/workplace skills), and to improve the comparability of measurement data across programs.

This memo is intended to offer additional information about how W-2 agencies should use the guidelines developed by the NRS in administering their basic education programs and meeting the Literacy and Numeracy Gains performance standard.

POLICY

Effective April 1, 2004, W-2 agencies must adopt the following practices in measuring the progress of participants in their basic education programs:

1. To measure increases in participants' basic educational skills and meet the Literacy and Numeracy Gains performance standard, W-2 agencies must assess the skills of each participant using one of the following tools or tests:
 - Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment System (CASAS, Life Skills)
 - Test of Adult Basic Education (TABE, Forms 5-6 and 7-8)
 - Adult Basic Learning Examination (ABLE, Forms E-F)
 - Adult Measure of Educational Skills (AMES, Forms 1 and 2)
 - WorkKeys (for the following ABE levels: High Intermediate Basic Education, Low Adult Secondary Education, and High Adult Secondary Education)
 - Student Performance Levels (SPL) for ESL
 - Basic English Skills Test (BEST) for ESL
2. In measuring increases in a participant's basic educational skills, a W-2 agency must use the same assessment tool both for pre-testing and for post-testing that participant. Although W-2 agencies are not required to use the same assessment tool for all participants or throughout all programs, they must administer whatever assessment tools they choose in a consistent (and preferably standardized) manner across programs.
3. In claiming an advancement of at least one functioning level by a participant for purposes of meeting the W-2 Literacy and Numeracy Gains Successful Completion performance standard, W-2 agencies must apply the criteria outlined in "Attachment D: Educational Functioning Level Descriptors" to TEGL 15-03 (see Appendix A attached to this memo). Agencies must apply the criteria ("descriptors") appropriate to the specific pre- and post-tests being used.

These “descriptors” systematize the way in which comparable skill levels in reading and writing, numeracy, and functional and workplace abilities are captured by the numerical scores on different basic education assessment tools or tests. The table of descriptors enables any given score on a particular tool or test to be “cross-walked” to one of the functioning skill levels used for performance measurement purposes.

Any pre-to-post-test increase in a participant’s score on one of the listed tests counts toward the performance standard if (and only if) it moves the participant into a higher functioning skill level as indicated on the cross-walked table of descriptors (irrespective of any increase in “grade levels” conventionally associated with that test).

For example: a participant whose score on TABE (5-6) in reading increases from 570 to 670 would not count toward the standard, because that increase takes place entirely within the “Beginning Basic Education” functional level. However, a participant whose score on that test increases from 660 to 683 would count toward the standard because that increase moves the participant up to the Low Intermediate Basic Education level.

Note, too, that a participant’s increase in functional level need take place in only one skill area (and only once during the contract period) in order to count toward the performance standard.

For example: a participant whose score on TABE (7-8) in reading increases from 425 to 480 would meet the standard even though that participant’s score on that same test in math increases only from 375 to 400.

4. Testing results must be documented in CARES on WPED and/or case comments. Case comments should clearly document the successful attainment. The educational activity should then reflect a closure reason as successful on WPCH.

Contact DWS/BWP Performance Standards staff at: dwwdwsbwppperfstd@dwd.state.wi.us, or your Regional Office should you have questions.

ATTACHMENT

Appendix A: Educational Functioning Level Descriptors

CONTACTS

BHCE CARES Information & Problem Resolution Center

★Program Categories – FS – Food Stamps, MA – Medicaid, SC – Senior Care, CTS – Caretaker Supplement, CC – Child Care, W-2 – Wisconsin Works, FSET – Food Stamp Employment and Training, CF – Children First, EA – Emergency Assistance, JAL – Job Access Loan, JC - Job Center Programs, RAP – Refugee Assistance Program, WtW – Welfare to Work, WIA – Workforce Investment Act, Other EP – Other Employment Programs.

DWD/DWS/BDS/